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ABSTRACT

This is the report of a panel of experts who met to attempt to improve the experience of Latin American students in U.S. universities in the field of Business Administration. The report is organized into five sections. The first section identifies the objectives of the U.S. institutions with respect to the Latin American students, and considers the goals of these students in coming to the U.S. for study. Section 2 deals with admissions and financial aid. Section 3 discusses orientation, counseling, and community exposure. Section 4 deals with the curriculum at the undergraduate, master's and doctoral levels; and Section 5 discusses the issues relating to incorporating U.S. work experience in the educational experience of these students. The report concludes with 24 recommendations for improvement. (AF)

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IMPROVING THE LATIN AMERICAN BUSINESS STUDENT'S EXPERIENCE IN THE U.S. UNIVERSITY

The Report of a Panel Sponsored By
The National Association for Foreign Student Affairs

Edited by
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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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University of Houston
Houston, Texas
March, 1970

Panel:
Melvyn R. Copen, Editor
Robert Mullins
Peter Nehemkis
Robert Seiler
Henry Steiner
Thomas Woodson

National Association for Foreign Student Affairs
1971

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PREFACE

The report which follows emanates from a Conference held in Houston, Texas, in March, 1970. The purpose of the conference was to look into ways of improving the experience of Latin American students in U.S. universities in the fields of Business Administration and Engineering. Two panels of distinguished academicians met concurrently over a three day period. While their conclusions in several instances were similar, in other areas there was some divergence. Consequently, separate reports were prepared. It is expected that the report of the Engineering panel will shortly be available.

The Conference was organized by the National Association for Foreign Student Affairs (NAFSA) and one of its Committees, the Committee on Latin American Students (CLAS), the first NAFSA Committee to concern itself specifically with students from one geographic area. The organization of this committee was made possible by a grant to NAFSA in the fall of 1966 by the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey.

One of the first activities of CLAS was to commission a survey of the attitudes and expectations of Latin American students in a selected number of United States Universities. The results of this survey, conducted by Dr. Gordon Ruscoe of the Center for Development Education at Syracuse University, were published by NAFSA in 1968. This lead to a conference, held at Sterling Forest Conference Center which made specific recommendations on ways of implementing suggestions made in the Ruscoe report. This is not the place to summarize the important recommendations which were made in the report on the Sterling Forest Conference prepared and distributed by NAFSA. Brief mention, however, should be made of the areas in which significant action has already taken place.

One recommendation was that more up-to-date material be made available to admissions and placement officers regarding the backgrounds of Latin American students. In December 1968 a workshop was held in San Juan, Puerto Rico. A published report entitled "The Admission and Placement of Students from Latin America" came from that conference. The countries covered were Brazil, Central America, Colombia, and Venezuela. In December, 1970, with the collaboration of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO), a second workshop was held covering Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, and Peru.

The Sterling Forest Report was much concerned with the necessity of providing adequate pre-departure orientation for students enrolling in U.S. universities. To this end there has been established the "Council on In-Country Orientation," which has already conducted surveys on those orientation programs already being conducted in Latin America. The Council is currently preparing a report on recent developments in pre-departure orientation for Latin American students.

The present report has its genesis in another Sterling Forest Conference recommendation, that

> ". . . a workshop or conference be set up . . . to discuss the special needs of students from Latin America and also the relationship between the academic courses offered and the educational needs and career opportunities in their homelands."

Because the two fields of study in the United States which attract the largest number of Latin American students are Business Administration and Engineering, it was decided that a conference should focus on these areas. Dr. Frank Tilier, Director of the Center for Study of Higher Education in Latin America, of the University of Houston, agreed to serve as Conference Coordinator and as Director of the Engineering group. Dr. Melvyn Copen, Associate Dean of the College of Business Administration, also of the University of Houston, was selected as Director of the Business section.

The Panelists representing the two disciplines met in Houston. The two groups, working independently, compared their findings only on the final morning of the three day session. The Business group was specifically charged with making concrete proposals to make the educational experience of Latin American students more relevant. It was hoped that this might be accomplished within the existing academic framework and without having to add additional courses to the curriculum. Their conclusions and suggestions are contained in this report.

NAFSA would like to take this opportunity to express its thanks to Dr. Frank Tiller, the University of Houston, the members of the panels, and especially to Dean Melvyn Copen for the preparation of the final report. The association is also extremely appreciative of the continued financial support from the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey which made possible both the conference and this report.

Henry Holland
Chairman
NAFSA Committee on Latin American Students

Colby College
Waterville, Maine
December, 1970

FOREWORD

Juan[1] received an M.B.A. degree from an accredited U.S. university. He returned to his Central American home feeling that he was fully capable of handling problems in business administration. In his position as director of a local company, however, he found that he was not an effective decision-maker or manager. His U.S. educational experience had led to unrealistic expectations of what business operations should be within the environment of his home country. Reflecting back, he found his U.S. education had been much less satisfying and productive than he had thought it would be.

Several years ago, Guillermo[1] enrolled in a Latin American institution which offered graduate training in business administration. This man, a political appointee, had just been placed in a major position of responsibility with respect to the operations of his nation's steel industry. He was 45 years of age, and realized that his purely government career had never provided exposure to the types of business problems he would now face. Consequently, he decided to obtain the training he believed he required in order to improve his effectiveness as a decision-maker in his new role. What made Guillermo so unusual was that he had the force of character to recognize his deficiencies and to return to school where he would be in competition with much younger men. Most individuals of his class, age, and experience would have simply moved into their new top-level positions and begun to make decisions without the benefit of familiarity with either the industry or with problems of business administration.

The two stories related above illustrate some of the key issues upon which the writers of this report focus. First, we are concerned with the value and applicability of the educational experience received by the average Latin American business administration student in the U.S. university. Second, recognizing the fact that much of the business and industrial activity of Latin America is conducted or affected by individuals trained in non-business professions (especially important in view of the interrelationship between the public and private sectors), we deal with the responsibility of U.S. universities to facilitate more effective managerial practices in Latin America through means broader than just the degree programs of our Colleges of Business Administration.

This report summarizes the conclusions and recommendations of a three-day conference sponsored by the National Association for Foreign Student Affairs. The purpose of the conference was: (1) to identify important issues relating to the educational experiences of Latin American students who come to the United States to study business administration, and (2) to propose suggestions for improving these experiences. The viewpoints expressed herewith are those of a six-man panel consisting of: Melvyn R. Copen, Associate Dean, College of Business Administration, University of Houston (chairman); Robert Mullins, Professor of Production Management, INCAE (Instituto Centro Americano de Administracion de Empresas, in Nicaragua), and the Harvard Business School; Peter Nehemkis, Special Lecturer, Graduate School of Business Administration, U.C.L.A.; Robert Seiler, Professor of Accounting, University of Houston; Henry Steiner, Professor of Transportation, University of Texas; and Thomas Woodson, Professor of Engineering, Harvey Mudd College. (Simultaneously, another panel addressed itself to similar issues with respect to engineering students.)

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[1] A fictitious name, but a real person and real situations.

IMPROVING THE LATIN AMERICAN BUSINESS STUDENT'S EXPERIENCE IN THE U.S. UNIVERSITY

INTRODUCTION

This report focuses on the following question: "How can we improve the educational experiences of the Latin American students who come to the United States to study business administration?"

The panel started with the premise that it is important to develop an educational process for the Latin American student which is relevant to his home environment. Although in the long run, we hope that local institutions will be able to perform this task, we recognize that, for the short and intermediate range, U.S. universities will remain as a primary avenue for the development of business competence in Latin America. The report is therefore addressed to the problems (both in the U.S. and in his home country) of the Latin American student who is preparing for a career in business or in business-related fields by studying in the United States. It focuses not only on individuals who will be employed in private and public sector industry, but also upon students who are preparing for government service in which they will have substantial interaction with business firms (e.g., through government regulation), and on other professions which directly relate to business activities.

The report is specifically directed towards the steps that can be taken to implement change and improve the educational experience for the Latin American student *within existing U.S. university structures and resource limitations.* We believe it impractical to suggest totally new programs or approaches, even though, from an educational viewpoint, they might be preferable.

Description of Report Format

The report is organized into five sections, each corresponding to an area which the panel felt to be critical. These areas, along with our rationales for selecting them, are described briefly below. A summary of the recommendations contained in the body of the report follows this introduction.

1. The starting point of any such analysis must necessarily begin with an examination and identification of the objectives of the student and the institution. The key word in the question addressed by the panel is "improve" and this is meaningful only with respect to a set of objectives. We did not attempt to quantify these goals, but we did feel that they should be made explicit. Consequently, the first section of the report deals with realistic objectives which we felt were germane to both the U.S. institution and the Latin American student. In the case of the U.S. universities, we tried to identify objectives by successive time frames.

2. The next area relates to admissions and financial support. The kinds of students we attract, their expectations, and the eventual results of their educational experiences are influenced substantially by what takes place at the input stage. We addressed ourselves not to matters of procedure, but instead, to the advisability of giving special consideration to the Latin American students vis-a-vis the U.S. student.

3. The third area concerns orientation (both prior to coming to the U.S. and while here), counseling, and community exposure while in the U.S. However, in view of the work being done by NAFSA and other organizations in this area, our lack of particular expertise in this realm, and conference time limitations, we simply stressed the importance of these functions and have treated them only as they directly relate to the other areas we examined.

4. Much of the report is devoted to curriculum matters. These are central to the educational process, although counseling, orientation, community exposure, and work experience certainly have major impact on the total education of the foreign student. We urge that more attention be given to identifying objectives and to insuring that the curricula of U.S. universities achieve both institutional and student needs. Where this is not done, undesirable consequences frequently result. In other words, institutions should be aware of the implications of actions they do or do not take.

5. Finally, the panel explored the question of U.S. work experience as part of the educational process for the Latin American student. Specifically, the focus was on how the Latin American student might better relate his classroom learning to practical experience that is relevant to his home environment.

In all cases, our recommendations were framed within the practical considerations of implementation at the operating level. Most U.S. schools have neither the experienced personnel nor the financial resources to devote a major effort to the problems of the business student from Latin America (or from any other part of the world). Consequently, many of our recommendations incorporate compromises between the ideal and the realistic.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Objectives

1. U.S. educational institutions should explicitly identify their own objectives with respect to the Latin American student.

2. A set of recommended objectives is the following:

   A. Long Range—to encourage and assist in the development of indigenous capability to provide business training.

   B. Intermediate Range—to satisfy the individual goals of the Latin American student; to enhance his ability and increase his motivation with respect to the above long-range objective.

   C. Short Range—to prepare better the Latin American student for his studies in the U.S. and for his role upon return home; to remove some of the impediments inhibiting or diverting such preparation within U.S. institutions.

3. Objectives of Latin American students who come to the United States often do not coincide with institutional objectives (especially the long-range objective indicated above).

4. In the panel's opinion, the largest number of Latin American students in business administration come to the U.S. for purposes of job enhancement, prestige, adventure, and for the quality and stability of U.S. academic institutions.

To a lesser extent, they are motivated by the desire to make contacts, to improve their upward social mobility, and to increase their fluency in the English language.

Of lesser importance (in terms of number of students with these as objectives), but nevertheless within the motivational framework, are family traditions, preparation for eventual immigration, obtaining specialized education, and patriotic or altruistic reasons.

5. There is a conflict between the desired long-range U.S. institutional objective and the importance of "service" to the student. These can be brought more closely into line via application of admissions procedures, financial aid policies, and effective counseling.

Admissions and Financial Aid

6. Counseling is a vital function, both prior to the time the Latin American student decides to come to the U.S. and upon his arrival and enrollment.

7. Schools which accept large numbers of Latin American students should be sure that their admissions offices contain at least one individual who is competent to evaluate Latin American transcripts and compare them with U.S. standards.

8. No distinction should be made between unconditional admission standards for the Latin American and the U.S. student.

9. Whenever a school does make such a distinction (by waiving some of its requirements for the Latin American student) it incurs an obligation to devote extra resources to that student to insure that he is not headed for failure.

10. Conditional admission, where the student is informed of deficiencies and is admitted on his own risk, is a possible alternative, but is not always desirable.

11. Financial aid to Latin American students should be awarded in accord with the institution's objective.

12. Latin American companies and government agencies should be encouraged to provide scholarship support for their key employees.

Orientation

13. Orientation (both pre-departure and upon arrival), counseling, and exposure to the local community are vital parts of the Latin American student's educational experience and should receive emphasis comparable to the course of studies he undertakes.

Curriculum

14. The curriculum of the Latin American graduate student in business should be modified through the use of electives and waivers to make it more meaningful to his home environment.

15. Due to the problems of implementation, flexibility for the undergraduate student should (and probably only can) be achieved through the use of electives.

16. To accomplish points 14 and 15, advisors should be assigned to the Latin American student (where possible) who are familiar with his home country or region.

17. Where possible, the following course materials (listed in order of priority) should be incorporated in the programs of the Latin American student:

New Enterprise	Survey of Industrial Engineering
Economic Development	Manufacturing Processes
Value Theory	Political Science
Social Psychology	
Cultural Anthropology	

18. Courses should be eliminated that deal solely with subjects or institutions peculiar to the U.S. (e.g., labor law). However, when such matters comprise only small portions of courses that contain materials important for the Latin American student, he should be required to take the entire course.

19. Colleges of business should provide flexibility in terms of prerequisites and course availability so that they can best serve the needs of students from other disciplines.

20. U.S. schools of business administration should initiate interaction with schools of public administration, law, engineering, agriculture, and economics, since many of the graduates of these disciplines either become businessmen in Latin America or enter areas of government which relate to business activities.

Work Experience

21. Where possible, schools of business administration should establish programs which will provide the Latin American student with opportunities to relate classroom work to operating conditions and practices in situations most similar to those he is likely to encounter at home.

22. Colleges of business should be encouraged to provide opportunities for their Latin American students to obtain not only industrial experience, but also experience in U.S. public agencies.

23. Colleges of business should encourage U.S. corporations with Latin American subsidiaries to recruit Latin American business graduates in the U.S.

Resource Commitment

24. U.S. institutions should not make any special commitment of resources to the Latin American student. However, as they examine the student's needs, they should be prepared to accept some changes in emphasis regarding the way their resources are applied.

OBJECTIVES

Of U.S. Institutions

An identification of the objectives of U.S. schools with respect to Latin American students of business must be divided into several time frames. Currently a college or university must deal with the student who is on its campus or whose admission application is pending. Revisions of policies or procedures can be planned for the intermediate future. Longer range objectives may involve a complete restructuring of thinking within U.S. or Latin American institutions or both. Consequently, we attempted to identify three distinct time frames and to place within them meaningful objectives.

LONG RANGE—To encourage and assist in the development of indigenous capability (i.e., in Latin American universities) to provide, in a balanced manner, the necessary managerial and administrative skills required to support economic and social development.

MEDIUM RANGE—To satisfy the individual goals of the Latin American student, and to enhance his ability and increase his motivation to contribute to the development of indigenous capability to train Latin American managerial talent.

SHORT RANGE—To eliminate the deficiencies contained in the Latin American student's background with respect to both his preparation for the U.S. educational process and his eventual role when he returns to his home country, and the deficiencies which currently exist in the U.S. institutional approach to the Latin American student (e.g., to promote an increased emphasis on the most vitally needed managerial skills for Latin Americans such as those related to human organizational matters and to entrepreneurship).

It should be noted that the orientation of the above set of objectives is largely directed towards the eventual impact of the educational experience on the home country. Although some Latin American students do not return home, the panel believed that it could make a greater contribution by focusing on the problems related to the students who do. The long-range objective we have established is directed solely at this goal. In the short and intermediate ranges, it is necessary to orient and prepare both groups of students for the U.S. educational experience, but once the student has been introduced to the system, the Latin American who plans to remain in this country should be treated like any U.S. student.

Of Latin American Students

The panel felt itself to be on much less secure ground when it attempted to identify the goals of the Latin American students who come to the U.S. to study business administration. However, we thought it important to make our own beliefs explicit. Accordingly, we have grouped into three categories, the factors which we believe significant. No qualitative consideration is implied in our ranking. The factors are not mutually exclusive and many will overlap. The basis for selecting and grouping the objectives is the panel members' experiences with Latin American business students in this country and abroad. (No attempt has been made to rank objectives in order of priority within the broad groups.)

OBJECTIVES OF MAJOR IMPORTANCE—

- Job Enhancement.
- Prestige.
- Adventure (the broadening experience of living in the U.S.).
- Educational Quality (including such factors as the more stable political environment on U.S. university campuses).

OBJECTIVES OF SECONDARY IMPORTANCE—

- Desire to make contacts.
- Assistance U.S. education gives to upward social mobility.
- Increased proficiency in the English language.

OBJECTIVES OF LOW IMPORTANCE—

- Continuation of family tradition (where other family members have attended U.S. schools).
- A prelude to attaining U.S. citizenship.
- Attainment of specialized education (where certain courses or degrees are not offered in Latin America).
- Obtaining significant work experience during the academic program.
- Patriotic motives (e.g., to serve the home country).

ADMISSIONS AND FINANCIAL AID

The areas of admissions and financial assistance play a vital role in the educational experiences of Latin American business students. The admission-screen largely determines the kinds of backgrounds that students will bring to U.S. universities, and both admissions and financial aid evaluations have major impact on the types of students who arrive, their objectives, and their effectiveness in dealing with both the U.S. and their home environments.

The panel devoted much of its attention to these problems as they occur at the graduate level. In most institutions, treatment of incoming undergraduates is handled by the university and not by the College of Business and often students do not select a business major or have significant contact with the college of business until their junior year. However, it is difficult to over-emphasize the need to provide undergraduate students with counseling in regard to problems they are likely to encounter. For example, the business administration major may have special difficulty with English due to the need to learn a new "business vocabulary" which is probably lacking in his native tongue. Students should also be aware of the need to prepare themselves for heavy emphases on quantitative methods, economics, and the study of business practices. (Pamphlets or special orientation programs might be useful in this regard.)

A critical area in both graduate and undergraduate education which the panel emphasized was that of transcript evaluation. It is important that admissions officers be able to relate the previous academic performance of the Latin American student to the admissions standards used in the United States, both to identify any deficiencies which can be given special remedial attention, and to make sure that the Latin American student is not, through our negligence, predestined for an unfortunate failure. Universities that plan to admit significant numbers of Latin American students should employ at least one well-qualified admissions officer who is familiar with the educational institutions and standards of Latin America and can make valid transcript evaluations. At the very least, they should obtain access to such expert advice. The work presently being done in this area by such organizations as NAFSA and the American Association of Collegiate Registrars should be encouraged.

At the graduate level, no distinction should be made in applying standards for unconditional admission to Latin American or U.S. students. Recognizing the diversity of admission standards of various U.S. schools, this does not infer that all Latin American students should have uniform minimum backgrounds. Instead, it implies that a particular school's policies should be consistent, regardless of the nationality of the student. Should a university elect to do otherwise, that is differentiate between standards for U.S. and Latin American students (and we are assuming that the difference would be in the direction of looser standards for the foreign students), we strongly believe that the school thereby acquires a responsibility to assure that opportunities are provided for the student to make up any deficiencies (e.g., in English proficiency). In other words, the institution that does make the distinction should be prepared to devote extra resources to insuring that the Latin American student will be able to deal with the educational process he will encounter. A possible alternative is conditional admission, where the prospective student is informed of his deficiencies prior to making his decision and receives counseling to help overcome them, fully aware of the risk he is assuming. In view of natural student optimism, however, this alternative leaves something to be desired.

There is need for a study directed toward learning more about what would be a reasonable "minimum" admission standard for Latin American students who come to the U.S. It is possible for a Latin American student to meet the standards of a U.S. university and still be totally unprepared for what follows—for example, in a case where the U.S. institution, thinking in terms of U.S. students, decides that high school English is satisfactory and, therefore, does not evaluate English proficiency as part of its admissions process. Such a study might compare a Latin American student's success (both in school and when he returns home) with his ranking according to normally applied U.S. admissions tests and other indicators. (It might do the same with respect to his contribution to long-range institutional objectives.) We believe it would be useful to determine some minimum level of competence in various critical areas (also to be identified by the study) and to identify background factors necessary to prepare the student to succeed in graduate school and then to successfully operate in his home environment.

With respect to financial aid, the panel believes that funds should only be used to further the institutional objectives of the granting organizations. For example, a college that had adopted the long-range objective previously stated on page 5 might restrict financial aid to those Latin American students whose career objectives would contribute to the continued economic and social development of their home countries. Again, we feel that the only meaningful statement that can be made here is that institutions should explicitly identify their objectives and use their resources accordingly rather than allow resources to be utilized in a more random patterns.

Wherever possible, public and private Latin American organizations should be encouraged to provide funds for fellowships and scholarships for key employees to pursue studies in the United States (or in Latin American institutions). We feel that this is especially important for government agencies which function in areas related to business. One advantage of such support is that it goes to individuals who already occupy positions of responsibility and who are most likely to return home and put their educations to practice.

ORIENTATION, COUNSELING AND COMMUNITY EXPOSURE

Effective orientation (both prior to coming to the U.S. and upon arrival), counseling, and community exposure are vital to the success of any foreign student's educational experience in the United States. Prior to his arrival, the student must know what to expect, and once he arrives he must receive counseling which will help him adapt. He must also become sensitive to the intimate relationship between the educational process and the cultural and economic environment from which it derives and to which it relates—and to do this he needs exposure to the local community off campus.

These problems are not peculiar just to Latin American students of business administration (except, perhaps, with respect to the topic of work experience which will be discussed in another section of this report). They apply to all foreign students, in all disciplines.

Much work already has been done in these fields, and much still remains to be accomplished. Because of the work being done in this area by a number of highly competent groups[1] and because of our own time limitations, the panel largely directed its attention to other issues. However the report would be incomplete if it did not stress the importance of these functions. Universities which admit large numbers of foreign students should be prepared to provide and facilitate activities of the above nature. This report deals with these areas only where they affect others under discussion.

[1] For example, see *Report on Pre-Departure Orientation in Latin America—Findings of Special NAFSA Team in Mexico, Colombia, Chile, June 16-July 5.* This report was prepared by Furman A. Bridgers, Director of International Education Services and Foreign Student Affairs of the University of Maryland, and George Hall, Executive Director of the Creole Foundation. It is available from NAFSA, 1860 19th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009. Another useful study is entitled: *English Language and Orientation Programs in the United States.* This was published in 1969 by the Institute of International Education, 809 United Nations Plaza, New York, N.Y. 10017. It includes a list of programs for training teachers of English as a second language.

CURRICULUM

Within the limitations imposed by existing university structures and resources, the panel believed that it would be unrealistic for the large majority of schools to attempt to accommodate the Latin American business student by tailoring courses specifically to meet his needs. Instead, maximum flexibility should be built into existing curricula to meet his requirements. This would involve the use of electives and waivers to provide the Latin American student with a package of courses that is, on the one hand, consistent with U.S. program structure, and on the other hand, meaningful to the student—one that minimizes the possibility that he will return to his country with an educational experience that is less than completely satisfactory.

To assist in this process, the Dean of each school should, wherever possible, designate one or more faculty members who are familiar with Latin America as counselors to Latin American students. These professors should have strong enough interest in Latin America to willingly undertake such a task. In conjunction with an academic field advisor (i.e., the professor who normally advises students who are pursuing a particular major), these faculty members can provide the counsel and expertise necessary to modify the U.S. oriented curriculum so that it more closely suits the Latin American student's needs. Such regional or country advisors may not be available in many institutions; however, where schools do have faculty members with both interest and expertise of this kind, the country advisor can do much to improve the quality of education received by the Latin American student. Where schools do not have such individuals, communications with other institutions could provide at least minimal information about curriculum modification.

Curriculum at the Master's Level

The panel believes that most Latin American students who come to the United States have had insufficient exposure to cultural and industrial processes, both at home and in the U.S. In consequence, wherever feasible, U.S. graduate schools of business should expose the Latin American student to a variety of courses and subjects frequently neglected in the normal U.S.-oriented curriculum. Furthermore, it is discouraging to most Latin American students to sit through courses which have little or no relevance to experiences which they will subsequently encounter in their own countries. For example, most M.B.A. curricula contain some courses which focus exclusively on the U.S. scene or on U.S. institutions. When such courses can be identified, they should be excluded from the Latin American student's program, unless they are associated with significant trends evolving on the Latin American horizon or unless the material is vital to an understanding of the cultural base of U.S. managerial practices.

We have tried to provide below a list of courses which we think would enhance the intellectual experience and knowledge of the majority of Latin American students and which such students should be encouraged

to take. We have used course names which are meaningful to the panelists, but because terminology differs from school to school, we have also provided descriptions. Most of these courses are currently being taught within U.S. universities, although not necessarily in the colleges of business.

We do not suggest that all of these courses should be included in the studies of each Latin American student. Instead, we recommend that, where it is possible to drop other courses (recommendations will be given below) and to utilize electives, subjects such as these be inserted into the Latin American student's curriculum. We have listed these courses in a sequence which we think reflects their priority for the Latin American environment.

NEW ENTERPRISES—The focus of this course is on the unusual stresses which occur and the talents which are required when starting a new business. This course would tend to develop an understanding and appreciation on the part of the student for entrepreneurial activity. It would provide more balance to the large number of courses in the typical U.S. curriculum which are oriented more towards roles in large organizations.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT—Most countries in Latin America are either in the early or intermediate stages of economic growth. Some understanding of the major problems such as those related to population growth, food supply, and resource allocation is necessary for the effective business practitioner.

VALUE THEORY—This course is sometimes taught in the college of business and sometimes in arts & sciences. It deals primarily with the value structure of the individual, how this structure changes, and how it enters into the decision-making process.

SOCIAL PHYCHOLOGY—The student requires a solid foundation in the mechanisms which relate the individual to various groups within society. This course focuses on the human elements as they link the individual to various social institutions.

CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY—It is vital that the student understand the cultural aspects of the society in which he operates. This is especially important for the Latin American business student studying in the U.S. because he needs to be able to identify the linkages between the managerial practices he studies and cultural values of the societies in which they are applied.

SURVEY OF INDUSTRIAL ENGINEERING—This survey course is needed to insure that the Latin American student understands the nature of the production process. As a manager in Latin America, he is likely to have a greater responsibility for training and directing his supervisors and workers than he would in the U.S. and he needs to have greater detailed knowledge of both work methodology and sources.

MANUFACTURING PROCESSES—This course, also a survey, is urged for the same reasons given above with respect to Industrial Engineering. The Latin American student receives very little exposure to the processes of production, and therefore will benefit from exposure to this type of survey course.

POLITICAL SCIENCE—Most Latin American students have imperfect knowledge of the political processes in their own countries and a distorted understanding of those of the United States. A non-conventional political science course, emphasizing the nature of the political process (and not the structural forms used in any particular nation or nations), perhaps taught in a comparative mode, would be very valuable.

To make room for the above courses, many schools would have to prune existing master's curricula. In other institutions, full accommodation might be achieved through use of electives already contained in the programs. In some cases, all that would be required is the willingness of a college of business administration to allow its students to take electives in other academic units of the university. However, we have identified certain areas which might be trimmed from existing curricula.

The following suggestions are not meant to imply that schools should start pulling courses apart and putting them back together for the benefit of the Latin American student. Instead, in keeping with the dictum that we work within existing resources and university structure, we propose that required courses (of the nature described below) be dropped from the Latin American student's curriculum only when the indicated material comprises the major focus of the course. In those cases where courses are structured so that "unnecessary" material is only a small part of the total coverage, the Latin American student should take the entire course. In other words, each of the suggestions is preceded by a strong "where possible and convenient." For purposes of clarity, suggestions that certain material be eliminated are accompanied by statements indicating related material which should be retained. The following list is not intended to be complete but gives an indication of the panel's thinking in this regard.

ADVANCED COURSES IN OPERATIONS RESEARCH are less productive, in terms of utilization of the Latin American student's time, than are courses from the previous list. However, the Latin American student should have a course which provides an introductory survey to operations research techniques. Where a school offers a two-course sequence as part of its core, one might be eliminated.

COMPUTER PROGRAMMING is of relatively little value to the average Latin American student, although his education would be deficient if he did not have exposure to at least an introductory course in EDP systems.

U.S. MARKETING INSTITUTIONS—It is important that the Latin American student understand basic marketing management. However, where a school has advanced courses which deal solely with institutional forms peculiar to the U.S. the value of time spent diminishes greatly.

ECONOMICS ORIENTED TO U.S. INSTITUTIONS—Similarly, a thorough understanding of macro and micro economics is vital. However, advanced courses dealing with U.S. taxation and the U.S. money and banking systems could be eliminated.

U.S. LABOR CONDITIONS AND U.S. TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS—These are only two examples of the subject content of a number of courses currently found in graduate business curricula which would be of limited value to the Latin American student. Wherever these are found, substitutions might be allowed.

With some exceptions noted above, most of the required quantitive courses and courses in managerial control (including accounting) should be included in the Latin American student's program. He requires a substantial grounding in basic and financial mathematics, statistics, and probability. In addition, in view of the needs for better data upon which to base managerial decisions, the control area (even though elements of it will be out of phase with Latin American financial reporting practices) should remain.

Curriculum at the Undergraduate Level

In discussing the undergraduate level curriculum, the panel believed that the greater diversity of curricula in the United States schools presented a separate problem. Some schools have, basically, business administration curricula; others have liberal arts curricula with a few business courses appended; and still others have combinations. Furthermore, in most schools the undergraduate curriculum is a subject for university consideration, whereas the graduate curriculum tends to be subject primarily to controls exercised by the college or school of business.

We therefore recommend that any modifications to the undergraduate curriculum be made in the same direction as that indicated for the graduate program, but that they be handled primarily through counseling the student with regard to electives. It is important for the student and his counselors to recognize the fact that business practices in Latin America differ from those of the United States, largely because of size and culture differences. However, because of the problems involved in waiving undergraduate courses and the resources required to provide the detailed counseling needed to modify the undergraduate programs, the elective route seems to be the most practical.

Curriculum at the Doctoral Level

The panel did not feel that it was necessary to consider education for Latin American students at the doctoral level in view of the high degree of flexibility that most such programs afford. Typically, doctoral programs are designed around the needs and desires of the individual, and, therefore are likely to incorporate subject material which suits the needs of the student and of his home environment.

General Comments

The U.S. business school has more than just a passive role in curriculum matters if it truly wants to do an effective job for the Latin American student. It is not enough to provide flexibility within its own master's or bachelor's programs for students of business. It also has a role to play with regard to other academic disciplines and with respect to industrial and government organizations. A number of ex mples of areas in which involvement might be increased are presented below.

Owing to the importance of the role played by Latin American government institutions in the direction of economic affairs, students coming to the U.S. who are now part of the government scene (or who have career plans which make it likely that they eventually will be) should receive strong counseling concerning the desirability of combining programs in public administration with selective courses in colleges of business administration or vice versa. Effective governmental administration in Latin America requires a far greater understanding of the operations of private business than that obtained by many students who pursue more traditionally government-oriented courses in the U.S. Colleges of business should provide both counseling and course offerings which will help improve the effectiveness of public administrators in this respect.

Similarly, there is great need for emphasizing certain aspects of business training for many of the Latin American students who study law, engineering, agriculture or economics. The social structure of Latin America is such that many of the students who study these disciplines eventually find themselves functioning primarily as businessmen. They need the exposure to the basic subjects of business administration. Consequently, business schools should accept the responsibility to initiate action, both in terms of providing flexibility within their own curricula to service the students of other disciplines and to open discussions with the faculties of these fields concerning how we can better prepare students for their eventual roles in their home societies.

We have discussed the use of the resources and talents of other academic units in the university (via their course offerings) to strengthen offerings in business administration to the Latin American student. Similar considerations can apply to the use of the strengths of other universities. Many successful regional university consortia are already in operation and have been providing valuable services to numerous educational institutions. This is also the case in respect to several of our multi-campus state universities. Often, colleges of business can provide increased flexibility, beyond their own resource means, through the establishment of such consortia. In fact, in such cases, using the consortium as a vehicle, it may be feasible for each participating institution to commit only a small amount of its resources and yet gain accessibility to a more ideal situation—i.e., the establishment of unique curricula and courses oriented towards the Latin American student's needs.

WORK EXPERIENCE

The issues relating to incorporating U.S. work experience in the educational experience of the Latin American student gave rise to the greatest diversity of opinion among the panelists, much as occurs in most colleges of business when the issue of cooperative programs arises. What disagreement we had, however, was directed primarily at the practicalities of implementation. The panel had little disagreement about the value of such work experience. The discussion was oriented to work specifically related to the education of the student, and not to work undertaken for the primary purpose of financing a student's way through school.

The opportunity of relating his educational experience to more practical forms of business experience is extremely important for the Latin American student. In most cases, his previous background and training has provided little contact with business conditions and methods of operations, and such experience would provide a useful reference frame for his studies. Furthermore, since he lacks this exposure, he is likely to suffer a rude shock (much like our friend Juan) when he returns home and discovers that things are not working the way they are supposed to. Unless he has some means of comparing the U.S. business environment to his own, he is likely to be confused and to have difficulty in adapting to home conditions.

We therefore urge that, wherever possible, schools assist the Latin American business student to obtain exposure to U.S. business practices, especially those which are most relevant to the kinds of situations the students will face when they return to their homes. This can be accomplished by the establishment of relationships with small and medium sized firms in appropriate business fields. The particular nature of the exposure could cover a broad spectrum, ranging from field trips to extended, full-time employment.

The type of exposure indicated above is preferable to that currently obtained by many Latin American students who work for 18 months in large U.S. corporations in an effort to gain experience before returning home. We feel that such assignments should be discouraged, except in those cases where the student plans to remain in the States or is working with a U.S. corporation in prelude to an assignment in one of its Latin American subsidiaries.

Similarly, it is important that the Latin American student be given the opportunity to observe and work with various types of U.S. public agencies. There is a strong likelihood that he may end up in or become involved with Latin American government organizations. The better his understanding of the way such organizations are intended to operate, and the mechanisms which tend to relate public and private operations, the more effective he is likely to be.

The problems of implementing such programs may be difficult. However, the issue is important enough that it should be recognized, and that institutions, especially those which have faculty members who are interested in this particular subject, should encourage course-related exposure to the functions of business and government institutions. Some of the problems may be alleviated through the establishment of contacts with local community organizations which may be interested in working with or hosting foreign students. Most universities have large business offices functioning within the institutional complex, and other universities are close to municipal or government organizations. However, we recognize that the implementation of such a program will require a special set of resources within the college and its environment, and that some schools may not be able to mount such an effort.

One of the problems is that many universities are not located in areas where it is possible to find the kind of experience desirable for the Latin American student (or even for U.S. nationals). Even in areas where small and medium sized companies abound, the operation of such programs would probably fluctuate with local economic situations. We recognize that in recession periods it might even be impossible to carry them forward. Another difficulty is that not all of the faculty of an institution will be interested in foreign students, and the burden of establishing relationships with outside organizations and running the programs might fall on the shoulders of just a few faculty members (who might be in departments only slightly related to the areas of interest of the students). Again, the problems cannot be overlooked. However, it is important enough to attempt to provide relevant work experience for the Latin American student that schools should be least examine this question to see whether or not such programs might be feasible.

Finally, it is important for U.S. colleges of business to encourage U.S. companies which operate in Latin America to recruit Latin American students in the U.S. Such practices provide useful job experience for the student and improve the effectiveness of recruiting efforts of the firms. In many cases, the recruiting process is left exclusively in the hands of the subsidiaries. This is often wasteful and uneconomic. If more U.S. companies were aware of the opportunities they are overlooking, more would recruit prospective Latin American employees here in the States.

CONCLUSION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It was the panel's opinion that much could be done to improve the educational experience of the Latin American business administration student who comes to the U.S. We considered the question of the commitment of the United States educational institution to the Latin American student, but felt that there should be no greater commitment of resources and efforts to a foreign student than to any other. Consequently, our suggestions have been offered in a manner that is consistent with current utilization of resources. However, although the magnitude of the commitment should not be greater, it may be necessary to alter its emphasis (for example, by selecting a faculty advisor on the basis of his knowledge of the student's home country, not just his knowledge of the academic field). The Latin American student's needs and background are somewhat different, and the institution, ideally, should recognize these differences and deal with them. The Latin American student, like the U.S. student, is an individual, and the system should be structured to respond, as much as possible, to individual needs. This applies whether the student is from the United States, Latin America, or any other area.

The panel would like to acknowledge the work being done by NAFSA. We are pleased to have been a part of one of its many efforts to improve the quality of education of foreign students in the United States, and have enjoyed working with its Executive Director, Mr. Hugh Jenkins; with Professor Henry Holland, the Chairman of NAFSA's Committee on Latin American Students; and with the other representatives of the organization. We are also indebted to the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey for its generous financial support of this seminar and to the University of Houston, for the support functions it provided. We hope that this document will provide a useful vehicle for generating further thinking with respect to the Latin American student who comes to the United States to study business administration.

Finally, the panel strongly urges that some mechanism should be provided to insure that any actions taken with respect to changing the nature of the U.S. educational process for the Latin American student should be coordinated among the various groups that are interested and involved in the subject. Accordingly, NAFSA should accept the responsibility to insure representation of all such parties in future research and any other extensions of conclusions deriving from this study and the study being prepared by the engineering group.

Signed,
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